

mence to send in their applications for bonds I will go after them in person and I am having my eye on Virginia and Maryland as a starting. The editor, at least, is determined that "Carthage shall be taken" and it will be by and by. Keep it up.

There are many other good things in No. 17 worthy of notice, but let this suffice for the present.

THE BRIDGE OF REDEMPTION

THEODORE L. CUYLER

As over yonder superb East River Bridge thousands of my Brooklyn neighbors pass every evening to their homes, so over the Gospel Bridge of Redemption myriads of souls have passed into better lives, and to their home in Heaven. It is the costliest structure in the universe, for in bringing many sons into glory, the Author of our salvation was made perfect thru sufferings. "For Christ hath once suffered for sins—the just for the unjust—that he might bring us to God." Whether man got his depravity from the apes, or whether he got it from his forefather Adam's fall into sin, it is an undisputed truth that he is far away from God. He had sunk so far that he could not get back if he would, and would not come back if he could.

The supreme object of Christ's atonement was to bring us to God—to bring us to a right idea of God's justice and love—to bring us out of enmity into reconciliation with God—to bring us out of selfishness and ungodliness into obedience and loving fellowship with our Heavenly Father. This is the glorious design of Calvary's Cross. Christ's redeeming love reared the bridge; Christ attracts us toward God by the beauty of his example; Christ lifts us by the converting power of his Spirit into a new life; Christ leads by the light of his Word and guiding grace; and the combined result of all his loving and lifting and leading is that a countless army of sinners are brought back to God. Oh, adorable Savior! when we think of the depths of thy humiliation, and the bitterness of thine agonies in the garden and on the cross, we are amazed at the length and breadth and height of thy atoning love. But when we shall behold thee on thy throne—all thy victories complete—and all thy blood-bought flock brought home to God; when we hear the swelling "Hallelujahs" that shall make Heaven ring with rapture, then we shall realize that it was for the joy set before thee, thou didst endure the cross, to bring many sons to glory.

This process of bringing sinful and sorrow-man back to God is the very core of the Gospel. When the omnipotent Jesus undertakes it, he makes the process very thorough. We hear much din and discussion about the marvels of "evolution"; but none of the philosophers who mock at the Gospel have discovered how to evolve a good man out of a depraved one. Much stress is laid upon "culture"; but culture cannot turn a thorn-

bush into a grape-vine. It can strengthen mind and refine manners; it cannot renovate a godless heart. Another school, with philanthropic intent, strikes somewhat deeper and aims at the reformation of human nature. But it has been pithily said that "reformation affects forms, not substance." It puts old materials into better shapes, but provides no new ones. It is not reformation that sinful human nature needs, but *regeneration*. That goes to the roots of things. That means the extirpation of the old principles of action and the implanting of new principles. It means—not a new form, but a new life. "Ye must be born again" was Christ's prescription to the man who wanted to enter the kingdom of God. Christ came to bring the infinitely precious boon of a new life for this world and the next. "Whoever is in Christ is a new creature." Men are away from God, in the dark; Jesus came to light them back to him. Men are away from God, in the cold; Jesus came to lead them into the sunshine of God's countenance. Men are away from God, in guilt and under condemnation; Jesus came to secure a full pardon to every penitent soul who is ready to come back to the Father by him. "I am the way; I am the truth; I am the life; no man cometh to the Father but by Me." The core of the Bible is Christianity; and Christianity means Christ.

"What shall I preach during this coming year?" Such is the inquiry of a young minister who is laying out his work for the season before him. To him, and to all others I would reply, Preach to sinful souls before your pulpit redemption by the Cross of Christ and regeneration of the Holy Spirit; preach it tenderly and fervently, but without defalcation or discount. Do not waste a moment in defending your Bible. God will take care of his own Word, if you only take care to preach it. Stand by that bridge of Redemption which divine love has reared, and exhort every man to hasten back by it to God. Pay no heed to the noisy challenge of the skeptics. When the bridge of redeeming grace had carried millions upon millions of sinful humanity over into a purer and holier life, and onward into Heaven, there is no need that you or I should be continually digging up the piles to see whether they are sound or whether they are rotten. "Praise the bridge that carries you safe over"—and brings you to God! Jesus Christ came into this world to bring men to God; and your chief business, my brother, is to lead every one you can reach, to Jesus Christ. Preach Him!

And now let every reader of this article raise the question honestly to himself—or herself—Have I thru faith in Jesus Christ been brought to God? Have I decisively broken from my old self and my old sins, and crossed that bridge which atoning love has built? Have I been born again? Am I a new creature? Do I make God's will my will, and God's Word my daily law of conduct? Am I growing into the sweet

temper of Christ, and in love for my fellow creatures, and in purity of heart, and in that holiness without which no man shall see the Lord? Do all men take knowledge of me that I am on God's side—striving to keep his commandments and to glorify him by my lips and by my life, my purse and my time, my votes and my influence? Am I living so as to attract other people to the Master whom I serve, and doing my utmost to lead precious souls to the Lord Jesus Christ?

These are vital questions which every one who professes and calls himself a Christian may put squarely to his own conscience. He who is commencing his work afresh in his church, his Sunday school, his business, his home or elsewhere would do well to make sure of his own position toward God. "Examine yourselves" is one of the plainest of Bible injunctions. Brethren, I know well the tremendously strong currents there are to sweep us away from God and carry us back to the dominion of this sinful world. Those currents sweep into a minister's study as well as into your stores and shops, and counting-rooms and homes. He who led us upon this bridge of redeeming love alone can keep us from being drawn back, or driven back; he only can keep our feet from falling and our souls from death. In the Christian life, standing still is impossible. *Pushing onward* is the only way to prevent going backward; and he who strives the most unselfishly to bring others to Christ, will get nearest to Christ himself.

Perhaps this article may fall under the eye of some one who is yet consciously far away from God. You are not satisfied with yourself, and your conscience condemns you. The Bible is to you a true book, and that Bible tells you that unless you are converted you never can see God; and that if you refuse Christ, you choose death. There is an impassable chasm between you and God which you can only cross by that bridge of redeeming grace which Christ has thrown across it. Repentance means quitting your old sins, and faith means setting your foot on that bridge. With an outstretched hand Jesus stands waiting to help you, to lead you and to guide you into a new life, a stronger, sweeter, purer, holier and happier life. He will bring you back to God. He stands ready to welcome you—not to a selfish religion which cares only to save your own soul, and not to an easy trip to Heaven in a palace car—but to a noble unselfish manhood or womanhood patterned after Christ in this world, and in the next world a life everlasting. To stay where you are means perdition! The first step you take toward Christ is the first step toward Heaven! At the day of Judgment it will probably appear that nearly every one's eternity has hinged on the decision of some single moment.

The burden of suffering seems a tombstone hung about our necks, while in reality it is only the weight necessary to keep down the diver while he is hunting for pearls.—*Richter*.